

3. IREC Climate Action Plan (CAP) documents.

Dorian proposed that we talk about the goals and the milestones. It's hard to know what our baselines are, and how to measure progress and evaluate effectiveness of strategies.

For instance: Increase electrification of vehicles; and reduce miles driven. And do we promote adoption of electric vehicles, and how do we collect data from our town to measure progress?

David said this would take a survey, house to house, which would be a difficult for small town energy committees to do. The IREC group has decided to work on two priority areas: Green Buying Guide and Increase Energy-Efficiency in Buildings (reduce waste and eliminate fossil fuels for heating and cooling).

Matt spoke very enthusiastically about the new federal legislation. It's a catalyst and an accelerator for all that we've been trying to do: offering financial incentives for people who are leaning toward good choices but hesitating, and also a remedy to supply-chain obstacles, which won't be obvious right away but will within three years.

A reasonable and important goal for our committee is to get across the message to our community "Electrify everything." The grid is not entirely green, but that's not a reason to not move forward and adopt every option; the green will get greener. There is enough electricity now, and there will be enough electricity. Even in a place with the dirtiest grid, an electric car and a heat pump

The new law will allow all of the kinds of programs we've been promoting (WindowDressers, for instance) to be expanded and accelerated; probably these will become state and utility programs.

New York (30% hike) and New Hampshire (100% hike) have had steep rate increases because their utilities are dependent upon fossil-fuel generation that is very unstable and unpredictable. Vermont is an island of stability.

Presently however, Dorian reminded, it's almost impossible to get a heat pump or an EV. And this is reminiscent of the 1970s oil shocks, when gas wasn't available at times, and people changed (in the short term). She asked how do we make a difference here? Get more people trained in how to install heat pumps?

This is temporary, Matt said. He called ARC Mechanical, which has only one truck doing heat pump installation, and he's put down his deposit; probably won't get installed until December or January, but the contractors are noticing the demand is there, and ARC will have another truck by the middle of 2023. Likewise David predicted that within two years there will be dozens of EV options, and this new bill is going to incentivize rapidly for US-based manufacture, for instance the GM plant in Ohio that's going to be making batteries.

Dorian asked if there's a way we can offer a kind of directory to let people know who they can call? Matt said there's about 15 to 20 companies that serve this area, and we need to have some criteria: that they offer genuinely cold-climate heat pumps, and that they have experience and are reliable.

Susan T. asked if Matt could reassure people that it's not so complicated, really: The most important actions you can take are A. Get an electric vehicle; and B. Replace your furnace with a cold-climate heat pump, and here are the steps you can take. And it's not so bad to be on a waiting list. Moreover the expense, with the current gas and oil prices, it's not even close anymore, the savings from the green choices are so dramatic and indisputable.

ACTION ITEM: Matt will do a list-serve posting with this reassuring message, and letting people know what contractors do heat-pump sizing and installation. We could then post this once a month or so (Dorian will do the regular postings, and Susan H. can add this to the blog postings from the Climate Action Group).

ACTION ITEM: Matt said he'd be willing to host another webinar on the consumer effects and impacts of the Investment Reduction Act (IRA), in September or early October. He could take questions on individual aspects of workforce and supply-chain problems for heat pumps.

ACTION ITEM: Dorian will share these IREC documents with the Planning Commission to begin to build agreement and cooperation on the goals and measures. We don't have enforcement mechanisms, but we could talk with them about the principles. Dorian will reach out to their current chair and offer to have a joint meeting to talk about the IREC goals and priorities.

ACTION ITEM: Dorian asked committee members to review the IREC documents shared for this meeting as homework; mark them up with questions and ideas for how we can advance the initiatives in our town. **JS: include those PDFs with the MINUTES.**

5. Sub-committee and other reports, monthly updates:

Transportation: David reiterated that the IRA has really strong incentives for EV manufacture and promotion. He also mentioned an idea, kind of like the E-Bike lending library, to allow people to try out an EV. More than show and tell. Possibly at the Red Barn? **ACTION ITEM:** David will work on an EV "try out" event, maybe for as soon as next month.

Community Solar: There is still 1.5% percent still available. Catamount is going ahead with test drilling, taking out some trees, and they're planning to commence in earnest around October.

Agriculture/Forestry: Susan T. has been attending workshops and webinars. What she's realizing is that there is so much going on relating to climate, and the government process is really working right now, but many people are confused and disoriented. It's a very important time to reach out to the other committees and bodies in our town, to help them understand the relevance of what's going on.

Susan H. has been in touch with David Paganelli about the Ashley Forest, and there is planning now underway for a meeting (probably next summer) to talk about sustainability planning for the community forest.

Discussion of the many downed trees from last week's storm. What would be the best uses for these?

Discussion of Town Garage: Jim reported on a conversation with Jeff Solsaa, who described the work they've been doing to assess the present building and figure out better options. Vershire, Chelsea, and Glover have recently built new town garages.

Discussion of a possible house tour this fall or next spring, so local people can actually see heat pumps (and photovoltaics) in use by their neighbors. **ACTION ITEM:** Consider who in town might be willing to participate in a show-and-tell solar and energy-efficient homes tour for some Saturday afternoon.

Adjourned: 8:40 pm Next Meeting: September 13, 2022, 7 pm via ZOOM

Enthusiastically submitted by Jim Schley, Recording Secretary